



CH 3003 Bern, September 2014

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR DRIVERS OF FOREIGN HEAVY GOODS VEHICLES (WITH TOTAL PERMISSIBLE WEIGHT EXCEEDING 3.5 TONNES) INTO, IN TRANSIT THROUGH, AND OUT OF SWITZERLAND

[extract from the [Swiss Federal Ordinance on Road Traffic Regulations, VRV](#)]
(available in German, French and Italian only)

1 Vehicle weights and dimensions (Articles 64 to 67, VRV)

1.1 Maximum permissible vehicle weight (in tonnes)

Maximum gross weights apply to HGVs and trailers according to registered category:

Motor vehicles:

- 40 t for motor vehicles with more than four axles, or 44 tonnes for unaccompanied combined transport (see section 4);
- 32 t for motor vehicles with four axles;
- 28 t for articulated buses with three axles;
- 25 t for motor vehicles with three axles;
- 26 t for motor vehicles with three axles, when the driving axle is fitted with twin tyres and air suspension (or equivalent), or if each driving axle is fitted with twin tyres and the maximum weight of each axle does not exceed 9.5 tonnes;
- 18 t for motor vehicles with two axles.

Trailers (excluding semi-trailers and centre-axle trailers):

- 32 t for trailers with four axles;
- 24 t for trailers with three axles;
- 18 t for trailers with two axles.

Road trains:

40 t for road trains with 5 or more axles, or 44 tonnes for unaccompanied combined transport (see section 4), though neither the motor vehicle nor the trailer may exceed the above-mentioned weight limit for single vehicles.

Articulated vehicles:

40 t for articulated vehicles (with 5 or more axles), or 44 tonnes for unaccompanied combined transport (see section 4).

1.2 Maximum permissible axle weight (in tonnes)

The following maximum weights apply according to the registered category:

Motor vehicles:

10 t single axle;

11.5 t single driving axle;

11.5 t tandem axles with a distance between the axles of less than 1 metre;

16 t tandem axles with a distance between the axles of 1 metre to less than 1.3 metres;

18 t tandem axles with a distance between the axles of 1.3 metres to less than 1.8 metres;

19 t tandem axles with a distance between the axles of 1.3 metres to less than 1.8 metres, if the driving axle is fitted with twin tyres and air suspension or equivalent suspension, or if each driving axle is fitted with twin tyres and the maximum weight of each axle does not exceed 9.5 tonnes;

21 t tri-axles with distances between the axles of not more than 1.3 metres;

24 t tri-axles with distances between the axles of more than 1.3 metres but not exceeding 1.4 metres;

27 t tri-axles with a distance between the axles exceeding 1.4 metres.

Trailers:

- 10 t single axle;
- 11 t tandem axles with a distance between the axles of less than 1 metre;
- 16 t tandem axles with a distance between the axles of 1 metre to less than 1.3 metres;
- 18 t tandem axles with a distance between the axles of 1.3 metres to less than 1.8 metres;
- 20 t tandem axles with a distance between the axles from 1.8 metres or more;
- 21 t tri-axles with distances between the axles of not more than 1.3 metres;
- 24 t tri-axles with distances between the axles of more than 1.3 metres but not exceeding 1.4 metres;
- 27 t tri-axles with a distance between the axles of more than 1.4 metres.

1.3 Maximum length (metres)

- 12.00 m motor vehicles, except buses;
- 12.00 m trailers, excluding semi-trailers;
- 13.50 m buses with two axles;
- 15.00 m buses with more than two axles;
- 16.50 m articulated vehicles;
- 18.75 m road trains;
- 18.75 m articulated buses.

If any removable attachments such as ski boxes are fitted to a bus or an articulated bus, the vehicle's length including the attachments must not exceed the maximum cited above.

1.4 Maximum width (metres)

2.60 m conditioned vehicles (each side wall at least 45 mm thick);

2.55 m all other vehicles.

1.5 Maximum height (metres)

4.00 m all vehicles, including load.

2 Tolerance

No tolerances apply to the above mentioned weights and dimensions, except as follows:

The axle weights cited in section 1.2 may be exceeded by a maximum of 2 percent if the operating weight of vehicles and combinations in accordance with section 1.1. is complied with.

3 Exemptions from maximum weights and dimensions (Articles 78 to 80, VRV)

Vehicles and vehicle combinations that exceed the maximum weights and dimensions cited in section 1 above require a special exemption permit.

An exemption may be granted for the transport of non-separable goods if it is not possible to comply with the specified maximum weight and dimensions even though the goods are to be transported by a suitable vehicle.

Applications for exemptions from maximum weights and dimensions for the transport of goods into and in transit through Switzerland should be submitted to the Swiss Federal Roads Office, c/o Schadenwehr Gotthard, P. O. Box, CH-6487 Göschenen (phone no. + 41 (0)41 885 03 20, fax no. + 41 (0)41 885 03 21, www.sonderbewilligung.ch). All applications must be made in writing (e.g. by e-mail or online) by not later than 7 days prior to commencement of the journey. Exemptions for transports from Switzerland to a foreign country are issued by the relevant cantonal authorities (see [addresses of cantonal authorities](#)).

4 Unaccompanied combined transport: road/water or road/rail

Unaccompanied combined transport refers to the carriage of containers and removable superstructures or the transport of HGV trailers from or to any rail freight transfer station or from or to any port in Switzerland, whereby the load does not change containers during transfer from one form of transport to another.

The following foreign rail and shipping transfer stations located immediately across the Swiss border are regarded as equivalent to Swiss transfer stations:

Singen (Germany), Bludenz (Austria), Wolfurt (Austria), Busto Arsizio (Italy), Domodossola (Italy), Rheinhafen Weil (Germany) – cf. [directives dated 20 July 2005](#) (in German).

Journeys to and from transfer stations for the purpose of unaccompanied combined transport may be carried out by vehicles with a total weight of up to 44 tonnes without the need for a permit. However, drivers must be able to demonstrate that their journey is expressly for the purpose of unaccompanied combined transport. For deliveries to a transfer station they should possess a booking confirmation, and for collection from a transfer station they should be able to present a bill of lading stamped by the rail operator, or an equivalent certificate from the shipping company. If no such documents can be produced, the maximum permissible total weight is 40 tonnes.

The applicable maximum weights for individual vehicles may not be exceeded. The dimensions of transfer equipment (bridges, containers, etc.) do not count as part of the load and must be treated as fixed vehicle installations when measuring the length, width and height of the vehicle.

5 Cabotage (domestic transport)

Domestic transport with foreign vehicles is prohibited. If they are used for the commercial carriage of passengers or goods picked up and set down in Switzerland, and the provisions of Swiss customs and excise legislation do not permit such operations with foreign vehicles, both motor vehicles and trailers must have Swiss vehicle documents and licence plates.

6 Sunday and night-time ban (Articles 91 to 93, VRV)

With the exception of passenger vehicles, a transport ban applies on Sundays and public holidays for:

- motor vehicles with a total permissible weight exceeding 3.5 tonnes;
- articulated vehicles with a total permissible towing weight exceeding 5 tonnes;
- vehicles with a trailer with a total permissible weight exceeding 3.5 tonnes.

In addition, a permanent ban on night-time driving applies to the above vehicles between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m.

Certain types of transport are exempted from the Sunday and night-time ban (cf. Article 91a, VRV).

Exemptions:

Exemptions may only be granted for emergencies (unavoidable journey on a Sunday or at night). Applications for exemptions must be submitted to the canton of domicile, or to the canton of origin of the journey subject to approval. For journeys originating abroad, the journey that requires approval commences in the canton of entry into Switzerland. As a rule, the issuing authority is the cantonal road traffic office (Strassenverkehrsamt), the cantonal motor vehicle inspection office (Motorfahrzeugkontrolle) or the cantonal traffic police (see [addresses of cantonal authorities](#)).

7 Speed limits (Articles 4 and 5, VRV)

Maximum permissible speeds on Swiss roads:

Within built-up areas	50 km/h
Outside built-up areas	
- Motor vehicles with a total permissible weight of more than 3.5 tonnes	80 km/h
- Road trains and articulated vehicles	80 km/h
On motorways (minimum speed, 80 km/h)	
- Coaches (excluding articulated buses)	100 km/h
- Motor vehicles for goods transport with total permissible weight of more than 3.5 tonnes	80 km/h
- Road trains and articulated vehicles	80 km/h

These speed limits may not be exceeded even if higher maximum speeds are indicated on road signs.

8 Useful addresses

Federal Department of the Environment,
Transport, Energy and Communications (DETEC)
Bundeshaus Nord
CH-3003 Bern, Switzerland
Phone no. ++41 (0)58 462 55 11
Fax no. ++41 (0)58 464 26 92
E-mail info@gs-uvek.admin.ch

Federal Office of Transport (FOT)
Mühlestrasse 6, 3063 Ittigen
CH-3003 Bern, Switzerland
Phone no. ++41 (0)58 462 57 11
Fax no. ++41 (0)58 462 58 11
E-mail info@bav.admin.ch

Swiss Federal Roads Office (FEDRO)
Weltpoststrasse 5, 3015 Bern
CH-3003 Bern, Switzerland
Phone no. ++41 (0)58 462 94 11
Fax no. ++41 (0)58 463 23 03
E-mail info@astra.admin.ch

Swiss Federal Customs Administration
Vehicles and Road Use Fees
Monbijoustrasse 40
CH-3003 Bern, Switzerland
Phone no. ++41 (0)58 462 65 11
Fax no. ++41 (0)58 462 78 72
E-mail ozd.zentrale@ezv.admin.ch

Swiss Road Transport Association (ASTAG)
Wölflistrasse 5
CH-3006 Bern, Switzerland
Phone no. ++41 (0)31 370 85 85
Fax no. ++41 (0)31 370 85 89
E-mail astag@astag.ch